

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised to make editorial changes thereto and generally improve the form thereof, and a substitute specification and abstract are provided. No new matter has been added by the substitute specification and abstract.

Claims 1-18 have been cancelled and claims 19-46 have been added.

These new claims have been drafted taking into account the informalities noted by the Examiner in section 1 of the Office Action, and are believed to be free of these informalities. Additionally, these new claims are of a proper multiple dependent form.

Claims 1-3, 5/1-5/3 and 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,675,500 to Vania Cadamuro. Please note that new claims 19-21, 24-26 and 38-40 correspond to original claims 1-3, 5/1-5/3 and 10-12, respectively. In response to this rejection, provided herewith are declarations from the Vania Cadamuro and Roberto Cadamuro, indicating that Vania Cadamuro is the sole inventor of the subject matter recited in claims 1-3, 5/1-5/3 and 10-12. Accordingly, U.S. Patent No. 6,675,500 is not available as a reference with regard to these claims, whereby claims 19-21, 24-26 and 38-40 are allowable.

Claims 13-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,675,500 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,383,153 to Dabir. Please note that new claims 41-46 correspond to original claims 13-18, respectively. In response to this rejection, it is hereby stated that U.S. Patent No. 6,675,500 and the invention of the instant application were commonly owned by Vania Cadamuro at the time of invention. Accordingly, U.S. Patent No. 6,675,500 is not available as prior art with regard to the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claims 13-18, whereby claims 41-46 are allowable.

Claims 4 and 5/4 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of base claims and any intervening claims. New claims 22 and 23 correspond to original claims 4

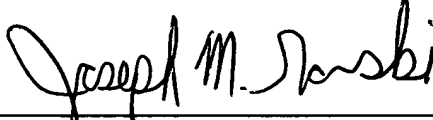
and 5/4, and accordingly, claims 22 and 23 are allowable for the same reasons that claims 4 and 5/4 were found to be allowable.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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December 19, 2005